

Have all the jobs been fake for years? [Read this](#), a NASA critique from 1992.

Basically society is run by useless people making work for other useless people so that together they can all alleviate their deep concern about not having a place in society.

Elon has a bigger tent of types of people that can help on his mission than I do, and even that tent is too small to include most people. I think that's the deep reason for the Elon haters, it's that they don't see their place in his society.

I lashed out at a fan in Bangkok, when he told me his friend was a fan of mine, I replied with "why do I care?" I was already in a bad mood, normally I'd be nicer and if you read this sorry it was directed at you, but I do sort of stand by the point. Low commitment from lots of people is useless. I'm not going to milk you for merch sales.

By the way, if you ever see me in public, I don't care that you are a fan, I don't understand why people think I would. If you want to talk, why would you open with that? Tell me something technical that I don't know. Then we are having a conversation.

We are in the middle of a revolution. Modern AI is the cherry on top, it's just continuing the same trendline that had spreadsheets replace 4 bookkeepers with 1.

The industrial revolution required labor at mass scale, hence we got liberal democracy. But I think it's over. If we don't have a society where there's a place for most people, governance will have to change.

Though don't worry if you consider yourself one of those useless people, I do not think your life will become materially bad. Between the fact that it's cheap to keep people alive, fed, and entertained, and that everyone no matter how secure believes they may be useless, it will be a lot more like retirement.

UBI is a [double edged sword](#). If you take it, you are no longer meaningfully a citizen.

It remains to be seen how this will all shape up, but the unprofitability of the average person in rich countries cannot be ignored for too much longer. Their expectations exceed their market value, hence why protectionist economics to bring manufacturing back to America will not work.

Every society has its problems, but as I've been spending more time in China I think they are living in the future. Your average American has no idea how nice the cities are here. Walkable. I can't get over how quiet the roads are, Chinese brand electric cars with big touch screens. High trust society.

I also learned that the ubiquitous mobile payments are not due to heavy handed government policy, but rather free market choice. And after you have used Alipay for a bit it really is convenient. Unlike credit cards, you can send money phone to phone by scanning a barcode, and I don't think there's a 3% fee sapping the economy.

Of course, a strong government is a devil's bargain. When things are good they are really good, but when things go bad they can go really bad. However, things are good now, and it's anyone's guess how it plays out. If Yudkowskian AI safety is a real concern, you might need a strong government to have any hope.

Here's a simple chart that shows where life will improve.

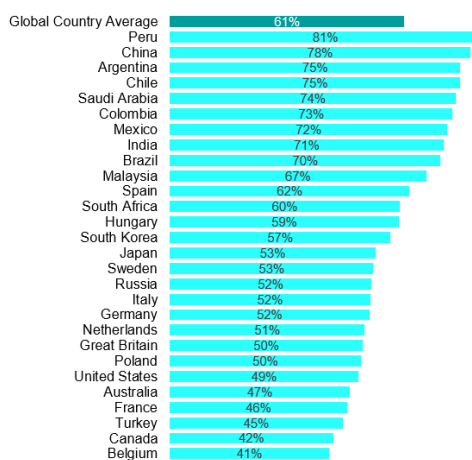
OVERALL EXPECTATION OF LIFE IMPROVEMENT BECAUSE OF A.I. (AVERAGE FOR 13 AREAS)

Q. Please indicate whether you expect that the increased use of artificial intelligence will make each of the following better or worse for you and your family?

Average of % "Better" for 13 areas:

Education/learning new things
Safety
Employment
Shopping
Transportation
Entertainment
Cost of living
Home
Income
Environment
Food/nutrition
Personal and family relationships
Freedom/legal rights

Base: 19,504 online adults aged 16-74 across 28 countries, Nov-Dec 2021
Online samples in Brazil, Chile, mainland China, Colombia, India, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, and Turkey tend to be more urban, educated, and/or affluent than the general population.
The "Global Country Average" reflects the average result for all the countries and markets where the survey was conducted. It has not been adjusted to the population size of each country or market and is not intended to suggest a total result.



These blog posts have become a bit of a travel diary. But these questions are way too big to ignore, and I think about them a lot. The optimism after the election was short lived, we are going to get bullshit protectionism and obstructionism.

Are we ready to strike a new deal restructuring Western society? I suspect not. The neoluddites still think they have a chance. But structurally they can't ever succeed, they can just choose if they want to bring the West down with them or not.